GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:829
ANSWERED ON:07.02.2017
Ceiling on Storage of Essential Items
Bidhuri Shri Ramesh

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government fixes any ceiling regarding storage of essential commodities by the companies/traders from time to time, and if so, the details thereof;
(b) whether the Government is aware that the companies/traders hoard large quantities of essential commodities taking advantage of such provision and indulge in profiteering by creating artificial shortage of these commodities;
(c) if so, the details thereof along with the remedial measures taken up by the Government in this regard;
(d) whether the Government proposes to make the State agencies more powerful to check hoarding and also to make amendments in the existing laws to ensure availability of essential commodities and to check hoarding; and
(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY).

(a) : Yes Madam. The Essential Commodities Act, 1955 empowers the Government to fix storage ceiling on essential commodities.

(b) & (c) : Vide order dated 09.06.1978, the States/UTs have been delegated with powers of Central Government under the EC Act, to take decisions inter-alia, on fixing of stock limits and notify the same only after the concurrence of the Central Government. The enforcement powers for taking action against violators of the order of the stock limits lies with the States/UTs including action against hoarding. Three National Consultation Meetings held in 2014, 2015 & 2016 which, were attended by Ministers/Secretaries of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs of States/UTs, addressed this issue and Action Plans were prepared which include action against hoarding.

(d) & (e) : No amendments are proposed in the existing laws as the State agencies have adequate powers under the law to check hoardings of essential commodities.

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